

**REPORT TO THE
TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
STATE OF HAWAII**

2003

**ON THE STATUS OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION FUND
AS ESTABLISHED BY ACT 169, SLH, 1994**

**PREPARED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
STATE OF HAWAII
December 2002**

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION FUND ACTIVITIES DURING FY 2002

This report is to provide a broad overview of the functional role of the Environmental Health Services Division (EHSD) and how its activities relate to the formerly known “Environmental Health Program Enhancement and Education Fund.” This report is submitted in compliance with Section 321-27(d), Hawaii Revised Statutes. This section states that the Department “shall submit a report to the Legislature concerning the status of the environmental health education fund, including, but not limited to the amount of monies taken in and expended from the fund, and the sources of receipts and uses of expenditures...”

The mission of the EHSD branches is core public health functions of assurance and assessment. The EHSD programs are regulatory in nature, with authority and responsibilities that preclude its delegation to the private sector. In performing these functions, the programs within EHSD must be able to prevent or reduce the occurrence of any environmentally-related communicable diseases, illnesses, or injury from contaminated food products, defective medical devices or vectors.

The programs in EHSD can be found in the following branches: Sanitation; Food and Drug; Vector Control; and Noise, Radiation and Indoor Air Quality. The Division staff are professionals with capabilities for assessing food contamination and adulteration; inspecting and permitting food establishments; evaluating x-ray devices and other sources of radiation; measuring and testing stationary noise standards; assessing charges of unsanitary conditions; responding to and resolving nuisance complaints relating to environmentally-related conditions; and abating vectors in public areas.

Delays in ability to fill vacant positions continue taking their toll on much of the Division’s already reduced resources. As this trend continues, staff training remains a significant focus for maximizing efficiency and effectiveness with limited staffing in order to satisfy performance of program objectives. The Environmental Health Education Fund allows the Division the appropriate mechanism to provide on-going education for the updating and cross-training staff with the technological and organizational changes that continues to remain during government’s redefinition and restructuring activities.

The current practice of utilization of an educational approach to motivate public and operators toward compliance with applicable standards and regulations has remained unchanged. In this regard, it is recognized that compliance with rules and regulations, not enforcement per se, is the primary objective of the EHSD programs. The fund is thus a vital component in this long-range plan, which includes continuing education for the industries that the Division regulates. The premise is that both education and public outreach efforts enhance compliance. Wide dissemination of information concerning the technical and scientific basis for the

program's regulatory requirements should contribute to a clearer understanding of the necessity for compliance. Education is always continuous, especially in areas where scientific finding occur. An informed public with a clear understanding of the public health rationale of program functions and corresponding regulatory requirements perform a fundamental role in the monitoring of potential environmental health problems, assuring that problems are identified and resolved before actual illness, injury or fatality occurs.

STATUS OF THE EHEF

As authorized in Section 321-27(a), HRS, the Department can collect and deposit fees for permits, licenses, inspections, various certificates, variances and investigations and reviews pursuant to Sections 321-11.5(a)(c) and 321-15, HRS.

Revenues collected for fiscal year 2002, and deposited into the fund totaled \$685,959. The primary sources of funds were collected statewide from permit fees for food establishments, plan reviews, temporary food applications, and license fees for tattoo artists, registered sanitarians, embalmers, laboratory technologists and laboratory directors.

Expenditures of \$172,724 are for personnel costs of two Registered Sanitarian IV's in the Food Safety Consultation and Education Program (located on the Big Island and Oahu, respectively), and one Data Processing Systems Analyst IV. The two Registered Sanitarians in the Food Safety Consultation and Education Program provide public outreach and education for the Neighbor Islands, as well as to most food establishments in Honolulu and its suburbs, consistent with Section 321-402, HRS. The Data Processing Systems Analyst IV provides the Division with a technical person for managing the Division's data system and assisting the programs on computer matters. A Data Processing Systems Analyst III position is established to provide additional support in computer systems management. An additional Registered Sanitarian IV position when filled will be to coordinate and streamline building plan reviews required by environmental health programs.

For fiscal year 2001, the Food Safety Consultation and Education Program provided the following:

FOOD SAFETY CONSULTATION & EDUCATION PROGRAM

<u>Description</u>	<u>Number</u>
Food Certification Workshops Given:	350
Student Attendance:	9,484
Students Certified:	7,590
Food Safety Classes Given:	1,710
Student Attendance:	32,995

The EHEF also enables the programs and personnel of the Environmental Health Services Division the means of providing improved public health services. In addition to on-going workshops conducted by the Food Safety Consultation and Education Program, the following are highlights of fiscal year 2002:

1. The Sanitation Program Manager attended the Food & Drug Administration Retail Food Seminar in Seattle, WA, August 20–24, 2001.
2. Sanitation Branch Program Manager attended the Conference for Food Protection in Nashville, TN, April 18–25, 2002.
3. A Registered Sanitarian whose responsibilities are key to regulating the milk industry in Hawaii attended the Pacific Region Milk Certification course in Reno, Nevada, November 5–9, 2001.
4. A Registered Sanitarian in the Food Consultation and Education Program participated in the National Environmental Health Association Annual Education Conference in Minneapolis, MN June 27 – July 3, 2002.
5. A Food and Drug inspector attended the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) Annual Education Conference on June 15–19, 2002. The AFDO International Workshop is dedicated to discussions on the ever-changing global trade environment with its myriad of political and technological problems.
6. A Food and Drug inspector attended the National Environmental Health Association Chemical and Bioterrorism Preparedness Conference in Minneapolis, MN June 27 – July 3, 2002.
7. Various workshops, conducted in Honolulu, were provided for Food & Drug and Sanitation Staff in the area of food safety. These included the HACCP Managing Food Safety Workshop, Basic Seafood HACCP course, Better Process School on Low Acid Food Processing for the Prevention of Botulism Organisms, Food & Drug Association (FDA) Histamine Workshop, FDA Forborne Disease Investigation Training Course, Facilitator Training Course, the Hawaii Environmental Health Association Annual Education Conference, and various administrative training sessions.
8. Various meetings for Managers and staff of both Sanitation and Food & Drug programs.
9. Investments in expanding the Division's computer infrastructure upgrades continued.

Total expenditures and encumbrances for fiscal year 2002 were \$296,023 (includes personnel costs). A total of \$27,508 was transferred to the general fund on June 30, 2002 as required under Section 321-27(c), HRS.

In summary, it would not have been possible to fund many of these program activities, personnel enhancement opportunities and technology infrastructure advancements without the Environmental Health Education Fund. Proposed expenditures for FY 2003 will continue the vision for prudent utilization of this special fund to ensure protection of public health needs at a time when much of government service is restructuring and re-inventing itself from its former heavy enforcement orientation to partnership building.